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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet traces the history of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) from its founding in 1904 through 1978. Section I, "Origin and Early Years, 1904-1920," explains that NCEA developed from the uniting of three separate Catholic educational organizations. Thomas J. Conaty, NCEA's first chief executive officer, established three small organizations to promote uniform standards of education at existing Catholic institutions of higher and secondary education. Section II, "Dimensions of Ministry, 1920-1944," explains how NCEA moved from an emphasis on preserving traditional scholastic liberal arts education to a cautious embracing of the more scientific progressive approach. This change was most apparent at the elementary level. Section III, "The Hochwalt Years, 1944-1966," reviews growth in NCEA under the direction of Frederick G. Hochwalt. During this time NCEA became a strong, active organization with membership from almost every Catholic educational institution in the United States. NCEA staff, membership, and income increased, and programs of research, membership services, and legislative involvement were initiated. Section IV, "The Post Vatican Era, 1966-1978," notes changes in NCEA membership, activities, and internal management. There is now an emphasis on cooperation with other private educational associations, compilation of national data needed for educational planning, and encouragement of parental involvement in educational decision-making. (AV)

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The Shaping of NCEA

by Donald C. Horrigan

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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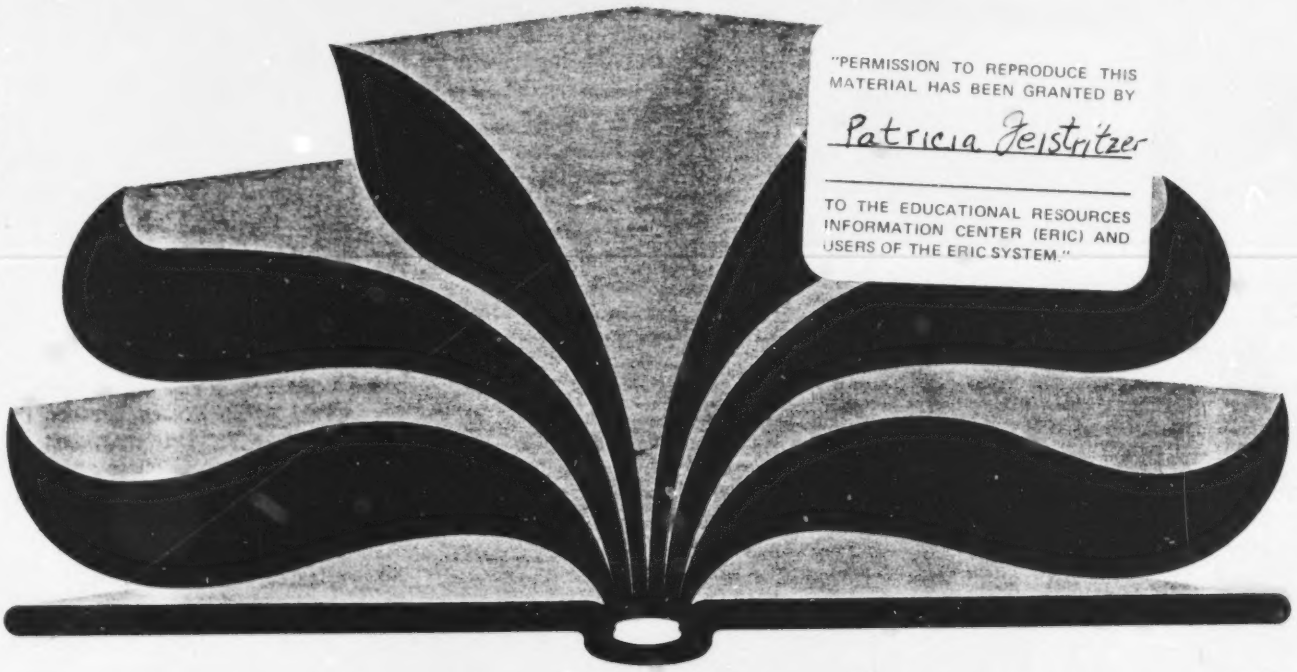

Origin and Early Years 1904-1920

With the opening of its convention in Philadelphia, April 16, 1979, the National Catholic Educational Association will be observing its 75th anniversary of service.

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The Association traces its official beginnings to the first meeting of the Catholic Educational Association (CEA), held in St. Louis, July 12-14, 1904. At that meeting three separate Catholic educational organizations—the Educational Conference of Seminary Faculties (1898), the Association of Catholic Colleges (1899), and the Parish School Conference (1902)—agreed to unite as the CEA.

Lasting institutions are more the result of purposeful planning and nurture than they are of happenstance and inattention. The NCEA owes its successful three-quarters of a century not only to the planning and nurture of its many members, but also to a select few who stand out as special builders and shapers. The foundations for the Association were laid by Thomas J. Conaty while he served as rector of the Catholic University of America (1896-1903). He convened the first meeting of the Conference of Seminary Faculties and became the founding president of both the Association of Catholic Colleges and the Parish School Conference. Conaty envisioned a national organization embracing all levels of Catholic education, and he took steps to make the vision a reality. In 1903, however, Conaty was appointed bishop of Monterey-Los Angeles. The duties of his appointment and the distance from the Catholic University made it impossible for him to remain active in the organizations he had founded.

In 1903 Francis W. Howard, the founding Secretary of the Parish School Conference, became the inheritor of Conaty's vision. Howard oversaw the founding of the CEA in July 1904 and became its first chief executive officer. He served as Secretary General for 25 years, 1904-1929. Four other men have served as chief executive of the Association since Howard.

Each has placed the stamp of his personality upon the Association. George Johnson held office from 1929 until 1944; Frederick G. Hochwalt, 1944-1966; C. Albert Koob, 1966-1974; John F. Meyers, 1974 to the present.

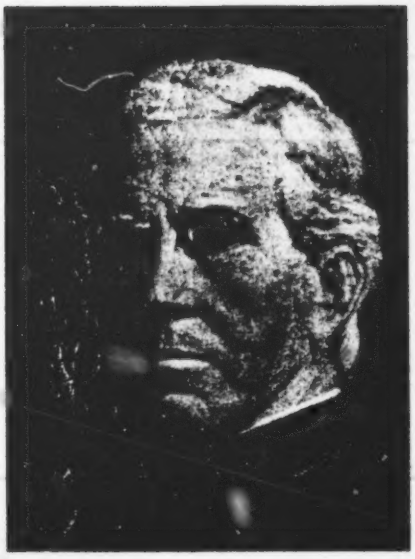
Catholic University was a six-year-old graduate school of theology when Thomas J. Conaty became rector in 1896. Its students were seminary graduates. Soon after taking charge, Conaty began to recruit graduate students from Catholic colleges. Besides finding it difficult to attract any large number of students, he and his staff found that most seminary and Catholic college graduates were far from qualified to meet the University's entrance standards. In April 1897 the University trustees authorized Conaty to call together the country's Catholic college and seminary officials to explore ways to obtain more and better qualified students. Conaty hoped to develop "a plan of bridging over the 'chasm' which existed between the requirements of the University and the actual qualifications of college and seminary graduates."[1]

The fifty-year-old Conaty brought to the task of organizing seminary and college officials his many years of experience in organizing Catholic temperance societies; founding, editing, and publishing the *Catholic Home and School Magazine;* and founding and directing the Catholic Summer School Movement. He was a promoter of education through free association and discussion. Edgar McCarren wrote this about Conaty:

Conaty's election to the presidency of both a national temperance society and the New York Summer School seemed to show an ability to gain the respect and confidence of a wide circle of friends. His prestige had been earned on merit and did not rest merely on the beneficence of influencial ecclesiastics. In addition, Conaty had been closely associated with one or another type of educational activity during the greater part of his priestly life. Furthermore, there seemed to be a possibility that he would be able to reconcile and rally to the support of the University some of those who had not heretofore appeared too sanguine about it.[2]

Fifteen seminary presidents responded favorably to Conaty's invitation to meet on May 26, 1898, in a day-long session at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, NY. The seminary presidents liked the idea of getting together so well that they voted to form a permanent organization—The Educational Conference of Seminary Faculties. They were not impressed, however, with Conaty's appeal that they af-

Francis W. Howard



Thomas J. Conaty

filiate with Catholic University and focus their programs toward preparing students to meet the University's requirements.[3] The Conference agreed to meet in Philadelphia in September 1899 and appointed a committee to make preparations. Only the committee met that year, however, and the Seminary Conference remained dormant until it was reactivated in July 1904 at the St. Louis meeting of the CEA. With the founding of the Seminary Conference, Conaty had taken the first step toward establishing a national Catholic educational organization.

He took the second step when, in response to invitation, 53 colleges sent representatives to a meeting at St. James High School in Chicago on April 12-13, 1899. The meeting was structured to give the widest possible representation to the various religious orders engaged in higher education. "The Ideals of College Life" was the theme, but Conaty's major purpose in calling the meeting was to bring about, as he said in his opening address, "the permanent establishment of an association of colleges, with annual meetings, in which college conditions shall be thoroughly questioned and answered. . . ."[4]

Conaty set about organizing seminars and colleges because he was aware of the need for higher and more uniform standards of education among them. The suggestion of formal articulation with Catholic University had not been well received by the seminaries. In dealing with the college presidents Conaty took another approach to reform—voluntary association. The college representatives welcomed the idea of free association. The delegates realized that in spite of differences, their common concerns made it imperative for them to meet regularly for discussion and to form a permanent organization. Conaty was unanimously chosen president of the Association of Catholic Colleges. With the establishment of the Association, he had laid a serviceable foundation for the national organization he envisioned. Noting the significance of the Association of Catholic Colleges in the future of the CEA, James Plough wrote:

As an experiment to be tried and tested, the First Annual Conference of Catholic Colleges established a basic pattern which was followed, with very few exceptions, from that meeting forward. Succeeding Catholic educational conventions usually contained the same elements: advanced releases to the press to promote extensive coverage; several days of conferences and discussions beginning with Mass and closing with a public demonstration; several papers of substantial quality, others rather limited; resolutions and committee meetings, and finally, a published ***Report of the Proceedings.*** *Although the Association expanded in later years to include parochial schools, and changed its name to Catholic Educational Association, the starting point was the Chicago conference of 1899.*[5]

Organizing the Parish School Conference was the third step in Conaty's plan for a national organization. Early in 1902 he requested that the bishops send representatives of their parish schools to the Chicago meeting of the Association of Catholic Colleges, July 9-10, 1902. The delegates were to discuss methods of work and possibly a plan of a general organization. Six dioceses were represented. Compared to the number of delegates representing 41 institutions in the college meeting, the parish school men had far from a commanding presence. They held informal meetings and decided to elect officers and to organize permanently. Bishop Conaty was elected president.

Conaty had reason to be pleased with the results of his efforts. In four years he had launched three organizations and had begun to provide a structure for national unity where there had been no hope for unity before. It was a time for unity. American public schools and secular colleges were beginning to settle into definite patterns. Three stages of instruction were emerging, each related to the other: an eight-year elementary program, a four-year high school one, and a four-year college one. The National Educational Association, founded in 1870, was recognized as playing a significant role in this movement toward unity. Many Catholic educators saw the need for a national Catholic educational organization that would do for Catholic schools what the NEA was doing for public schools. By July 1902 Conaty had the components for such an organization nearly in place.

Nothing in the structure of Catholic higher or lower education, however, readily lent itself to the promotion of unity and cooperative effort. Higher education was the exclusive province of individual religious orders who ran small six-to eight-year colleges to support themselves. They were exempt from the authority of local bishops and in competition with one another. Their generally classical curricula were patterned more after European models than after American ones, and the quality of the courses was uneven and poor in comparison to that of other American colleges. The religious order colleges jealously guarded their independence from episcopal regulation, as well as their autonomy with respect to each other. If unity were to come to Catholic higher education, it would not be achieved through episcopal mandate nor through any system imposed by another institution, such as Catholic University.

There was, furthermore, no basis for national unity at the lower level of Catholic education. The six-to ten-year parish school run under the authority of the local bishop and supervised and staffed by the local pastor was the unit of elementary education. The movement toward Catholic high schools was in its infancy. Parish schools tended to be more American and practical in nature than colleges because

Sixth graders of St. Patrick's grammar "department," New York City, circa 1900.

they were influenced by their public school counterparts. Bishops, just as religious orders, were jealous of their autonomy and authority. They were not inclined toward formal efforts at national unification that might erode their respective positions. Factional rivalries such as those between the Irish and the Germans intensified the distances that separated diocese from diocese, higher education from lower, and the college from the university.

When Thomas Conaty chose the voluntary association model as an approach for promoting national unity, he selected the least threatening and perhaps the only workable formula available. At the meeting on Oct. 28, 1903, he outlined his plan for such a voluntary national association. He said to the assembled delegates of the College and Parish School Conferences:

I think the question is really one of national organization which would include all these subordinate conferences, leaving each independent in itself, with its own officers, doing its own work, and yet having a national character.[6]

The delegates agreed and appointed committees to form a plan of organization to be presented at the joint convention in St. Louis in 1904. Conaty's work was finished, however. He had been appointed Bishop of Monterey-Los Angeles on March 27, 1903. He accepted election to the presidency of the conferences only until he could work out a transfer of authority with the newly appointed rector of Catholic University, Denis J. O'Connell.

It was Francis Howard who saw to it that Conaty's plan for the Association was incorporated into the CEA's Articles of Organization. The three organizations Conaty had nurtured into existence agreed during July 12-14, 1904, to become three departments of one Association: College and University, Seminary, and Parish School. Denis J. O'Connell was chosen as president and Howard as secretary of the new Association. Father Howard, chairman of the Columbus (Ohio) Diocesan School Board, had come to Chicago in 1902 to represent his diocese. From the time he was elected Secretary of the Parish School Conference, he became closely involved in Conaty's work. Of Howard's role in founding the Association, McCarren has written:

No one man did more to get the Association off to a good start. No one did more to keep it together in its formative stages. It was not an accident that he was chosen to be the first Secretary General, a post he retained for 25 years.[7]

Philosophically, Howard was almost doctrinaire in his determination to preserve individual freedom. As superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Columbus he preferred the title "school visitor" to that of superintendent in order to emphasize the local autonomy of the pastor. He was convinced that legitimate educational reform could come only through persuasive discussion and example—never through external coercion whether exercised by the bishops, by other institutions, or by the state. He was, moreoever, equally committed to the achievement of national unity in Catholic education. Howard's concern for achieving unity while preserving individual freedom was the hallmark of the guidance he gave the CEA.

Howard had overcome some efforts to make the CEA an episcopally controlled regulatory agency in 1904. The Articles of Organization embodied his philosophy of freedom in unity. Their acceptance, with only slight modification in 1907, as the permanent constitution of the CEA signaled a triumph for Howard's philosophy and managerial ability.

Public clashes between "progressive university-minded" members and the more "traditional pastoral-minded" members of the Association emerged (1908-1911) over several issues. Howard was of a traditional bent but his goal was unity through consensus, not the dominance of one position at the expense of another. To achieve consensus he established an advisory committee, modeled after the

Faculty members (before 1900) of St. Patrick's grammar department, New York City (maybe).

NEA's national council, to study various aspects of controversial issues as they arose and to direct the Association's policy. From the time of its origin the committee had representation of every educational position except that of the hierarchy in its membership. It was, according to Plough, "the closest form of unity achieved thus far in Catholic educational history."[8] After the committee's formation the public meetings of the CEA took on an appearance of greater unity and direction. Although extra-constitutional in nature, the advisory committee gradually displaced the executive board as the effective governing power. The advisory committee, with Howard as an active member, dominated the general affairs of the Association for over 30 years.

Three issues were prominent in CEA discussions during its early years. The issues were the length and nature of the elementary school curriculum; the question of the standardization of Catholic colleges and the role of the CEA in standardizing them; and the role of the nation's hierarchy in fostering Catholic educational unity. By 1915, Plough has concluded, there was concensus on the three issues:

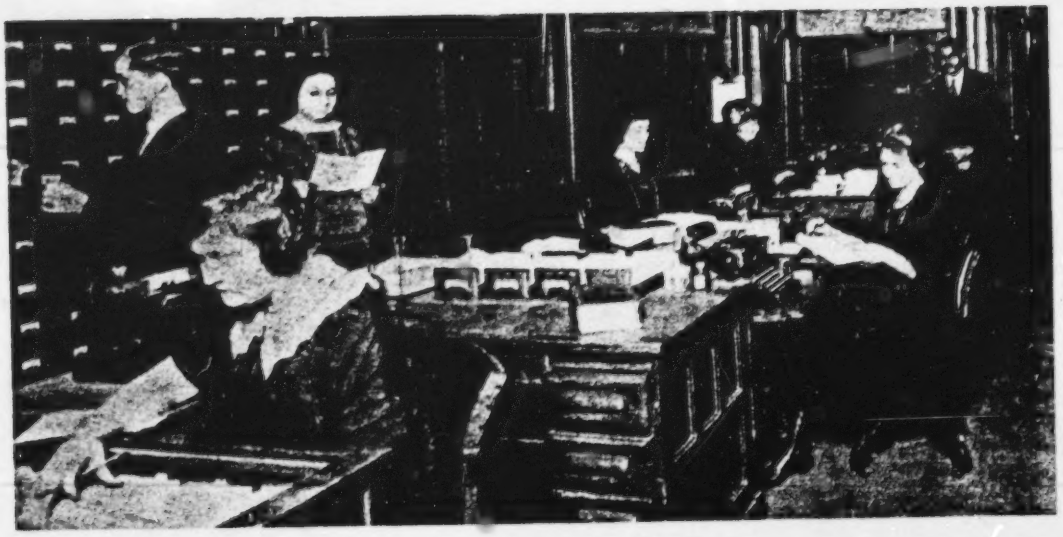
After a decade and more of discussions three issues had been decided on paper: proper articulation in the school system required reorganization and cooperation between the schools and colleges; deserving recognition in higher education required definition and distinction by means of accepted standards; general unity and stated policy required national leadership through the hierarchy. As of 1915 the CEA had made this plain. Practical action on these proposals remained the work of another era.[9]

Howard's presence was felt in the formulation of policy on each of the issues. Through his efforts the Association endorsed a proposal for a six-year elementary school curriculum. The proposal flew in the face of the developing 8-4-4 curriculum in the public schools. It advocated concentration on the strict intellectual development of children as opposed to what were seen as erroneous curricular "fads" infecting the public schools. Secondary education was to be handled by the colleges insofar as classical training was concerned and two to four years of further training for business or trades was seen as sufficient for students not bound for the professions. If the proposal were accepted, Catholic schools would have parted ways with developments in the public schools. The approach was vintage Howard.

In 1915 the CEA adopted a resolution which called for the standardization of Catholic colleges and for the CEA to become a voluntary standardizing agency. Howard and his group vigorously opposed the concept of standardization because they saw it as unwarranted interference with the freedom of individual institutions. It was not until accrediting agencies such as the North Central Association appeared likely to step into the field of accrediting Catholic colleges that Howard accepted such a role for the Association. A program of standardization was instituted in 1918 and continued through 1938.

Howard treated the relationship of the hierarchy to the Association as an extremely delicate matter. He judged that any direct episcopal control over the organization would destroy its usefulness as an agent for promoting unity. College representatives would not have tolerated such a relationship. On the other hand, he sought the hierarchy's general approval for the work of the Association and he was convinced that effective national unity was impossible unless the bishops took steps to speak with one voice on general questions of educational policy. Educators needed authoritative guidance on such matters as curricular reform, standardization, relationships with state and federal agencies, and federal and state educational legislation.

World War I forced the hierarchy to organize in order to deal with problems from a national perspective. First to be organized was the National Catholic War Council and then in September 1919 the



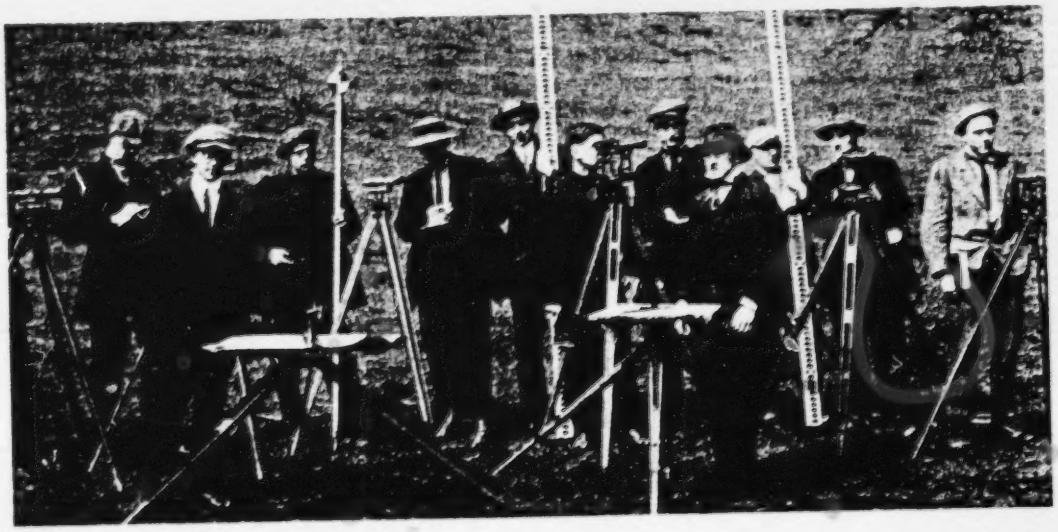
Catholic University of America employees at work in Caldwell Hall offices in early 1900s.

National Catholic Welfare Council as an agency to coordinate all Catholic activities, including education. Such an organization was more than Howard wanted. Freedom from unnecessary bureaucratic centralization was his reason for opposing the bishops' move to incorporate the CEA into the NCWC as its bureau of education. Failing in that effort, the bishops next asked Howard to become secretary of the new Department of Education. In the interests of freedom for the Association he declined and accepted instead a position on the department's executive committee. In membership the group was identical to that of the CEA's advisory committee. Howard had hoped to have the bishops seek the Association's counsel, but he had no desire to sacrifice its independence and freedom to deal with issues in Catholic education. With the men on the CEA's advisory committee making up the NCWC Department of Education executive committee, Howard had achieved an effective balance between influence and control.

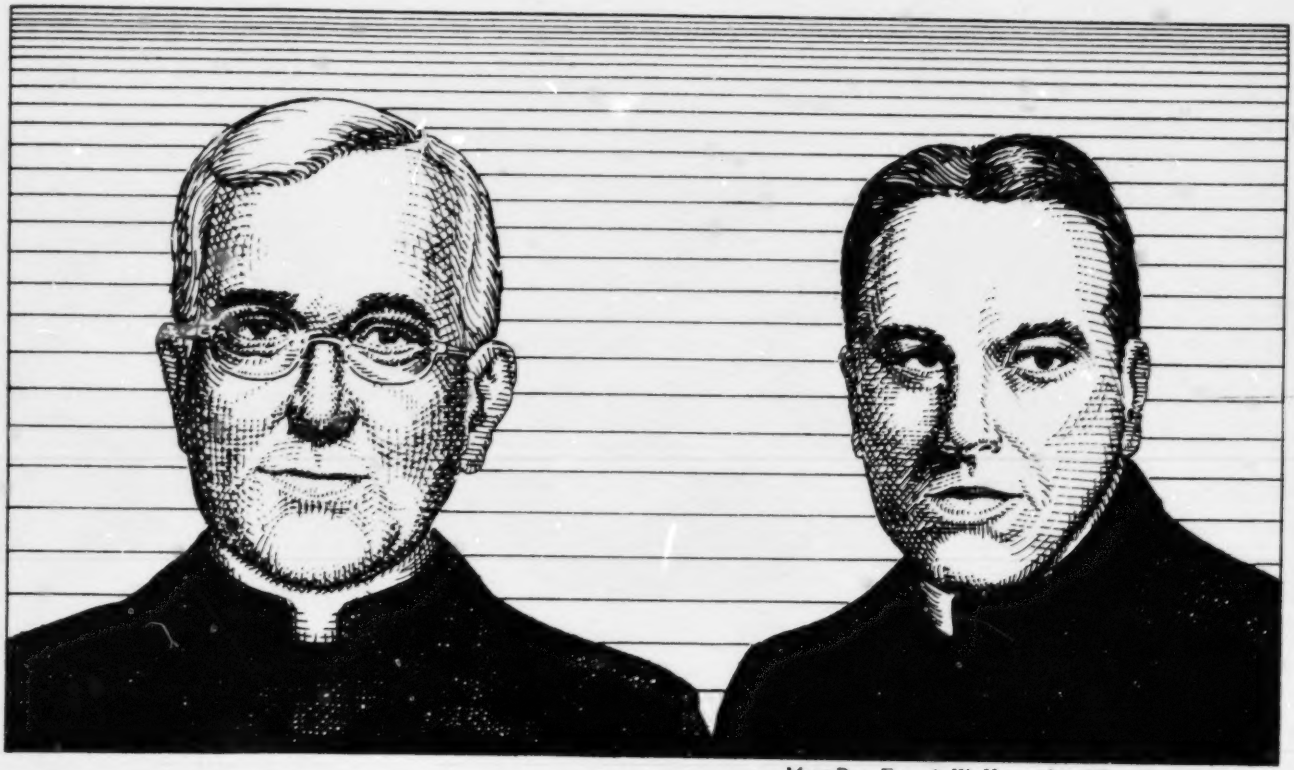
The founding of the NCWC with its Department of Education marked the end of the early years of the CEA. Prior to 1919 the Association had been the only effective unifying agency for Catholic education at the national level. With the working out of a relationship between the Association and the Department of Education in February 1920 a new era had begun. From that time forward the fortunes of both agencies would be entwined. Chronologically, the Association had been founded between two formal attempts to unify Catholic education. Catholic University was founded "as the capstone and centralizer of the Catholic school system"; the NCWC "as the central organ for all Catholic activities."[10]

The foundation and early years of the CEA were as much in opposition to Catholic University as they were in cooperation with it. Early relationships with the NCWC were problematic, especially for Howard. The years following 1920 bear witness to a curious intermeshing of men and events among all three of these institutions. For another quarter of a century Howard added color to that history.

Some member of the Catholic University surveying class of 1913.



Dimensions of Ministry
1920-1944



Most Rev. Francis W. Howard and Rev. George Johnson

Howard's concerns during the early years of his administration (1904-1920) were those of adopting a serviceable constitution and achieving positive working relationships among the diverse factions that existed within the membership. He was concerned, furthermore, that the Association remain free from domination by other institutions such as Catholic University and the U.S. Hierarchy. Early in 1920 Howard established a relationship of independent cooperation between the newly formed Department of Education, NCWC, and the CEA. He had successfully guided the Association through the last major threat to its existence as a totally voluntary association.

This section deals with the next twenty-five year period (1920-1944) in the NCEA's history and the influence that Francis Howard and George Johnson had in helping the Association define the outward stance of its ministry. Howard served as Secretary General through 1928-29. Johnson, his successor, was Secretary until 1944. The question facing the Association was whether its ministry would be that of preserving and perfecting traditional scholastic liberal arts education or of cautiously embracing a scientific progressive approach. To stay with the old was to risk having schools stigmatized as inadequate and out of touch with American life. To embrace the new was to risk secularization and the loss of the very reason for a Catholic educational ministry.

Through the force of his administration of the NCEA and his example as bishop of Covington, Kentucky (1923-1944), Howard sought to persuade Catholic educators to hold on to the classical academic tradition and perfect it. In an attempt to make his diocesan educational system an exemplar of such an approach he founded two four-year preparatory col-

leges, the Covington and Lexington Latin Schools, which offered a strictly classical curriculum for boys destined for the priesthood or the liberal professions. Select students entered the Latin schools upon completion of the sixth grade and were qualified for college after leaving them. Howard also founded a central high school and articulated its curriculum closely with the parish schools. James Plough has observed that Howard's diocesan monthly, *The Messenger*,

> *was probably the most education-centered newspaper in the American Catholic press. Though serving a mission diocese,* ***The Messenger*** *carefully followed the progress of the Latin Schools and published serialized digests of St. Thomas' philosophy of education. Howard's traditional approach, and his opposition to the American system, may be illustrated in a single sentence: "It is well for all teachers to remember," he told the instructors in his parish schools, "that there is nothing good in modern pedagogy that was not known to Aristotle."*[11]

Francis Howard's principal contribution to the Association's dialogue over the direction of U.S. Catholic educational ministry (1920-1929) was to see that the traditional position was well represented and defended by speakers at the annual meetings. He worked successfully through the executive board and the advisory committee to resist any structural or procedural change within the Association. The only changes were an addition of a Blind Section to the Parish School Department and a Library Section to the Department of Colleges and Secondary Schools (1923). He consistently resisted pressure from secondary school people for the creation of a separate High School Department, saying that "too much division and multiplication of sections in the Department of Colleges and Secondary Schools will weaken the Association."[12]

Stability was the Association's leading characteristic during the last ten years of Howard's secretariate. Membership fluctuated between 2,300 and 2,500. Although records are far from complete it seems that convention registration remained constant at about 1,000. The *Proceedings* of the annual three-day convention became ponderous six to eight hundred page volumes. Howard routinely distributed four thousand copies. He was intent on publishing a body of Catholic educational literature that would rival—on the library shelves at least—the National Education Association. By 1927 "the scope of influence of the Association" had widened to such an extent that the executive board added the word "National" to the name of the Association.[13] A similar proposal had been rejected in 1918.

The 1928 convention was the silver anniversary meeting of the NCEA and Howard's last as Secretary. In twenty-five years he had seen the Association become a stable fixture among national Catholic educational agencies. His tendency to stay with the tried and true in policy had caused him to resist any significant changes in its original structure. After twenty-five years, however, he was ready to admit to the need for change. Writing the "Introduction" to the 1928 *Proceedings*, he said:

> *With this meeting the Association enters upon a new period. The twenty-five years of its existence have been devoted to the task of showing the real worth of Catholic education to Catholic and non-Catholic alike, and of defending the Catholic position in education. . . .*
>
> *The work done by the Association in the past has accomplished its purpose. There is now need of simplifying the organization in order that it may operate to better advantage and cope more effectively with the problems that are before us.*[14]

Major personnel shifts ushered in a "new period" in the Association's history. At the 1929 convention Howard became President General succeeding Thomas Shahan. After twenty years' service Shahan had resigned as Catholic University Rector and NCEA President. Howard's election broke the custom of having a rector of Catholic University serve as NCEA President General. Howard's successor as Association Secretary General was George Johnson, professor of education at Catholic University and newly appointed Director of the Department of Education, NCWC. Johnson's election effectively interlocked the administration of the three agencies Howard had long striven to keep distinct, if not entirely separate. Although Howard remained active as NCEA President (1929-1936) and as chairman of the advisory committee until his death (1944), Johnson's election marked the end of his controlling influence within the Association.

George Johnson was Catholic University's leading proponent of systematic reform within Catholic education. He had been a student and was the successor of a pioneer reformer at the University, Dr. Thomas Shields. As the first chairman of the University's Education Department

Shields had initiated major reform programs. Among them were *The Catholic Educational Review*, Sisters College, and the Affiliation Program for Catholic secondary schools. Shields was, moreover, the "first major catechetecal theorist of the Catholic community in twentieth century America."[15] When Shields died in the winter of 1921, University Rector Shahan replaced him with the young priest-superintendent of schools for the diocese of Toledo, Ohio, Dr. George Johnson.

Johnson's specialty was elementary curriculum reform. In addition to teaching courses in educational administration and supervision, he edited *The Catholic Educational Review* and directed the Thomas Shields Memorial School near the University. Johnson was one of the founders of the Commission on American Citizenship (1938) and served as its Director (1940-44). The Commission was charged by the hierarchy with producing a religiously intergrated curriculum for all grades of the U. S. Catholic schools and with producing a series of integrated texts to be used to implement the curriculum. By establishing the Commission, the U. S. hierarchy had given its blessing to Johnson's approach to curricular reform—an approach that emphasized child needs, experimental learning, and an activity centered curriculum.[16]

Johnson was a prolific writer of educational articles. Between 1921 and 1944 he published two books and 115 articles. He became active in the NCEA while superintendent of Toledo diocesan schools. Over the years he delivered 16 major papers at NCEA meetings—addressing sessions more frequently than any other educator. He consistently challenged Catholic educators to be fearless in their efforts to rise above problems. Johnson was convinced that a genuine Catholic philosophy of education demanded Catholic educators to be bold and "experimental" in their search for the "most effective methods and procedures for translating our fundamental educational philosophy into scholastic practice."[17] To those who were suspicious of the newer methods of progressive scientific education, he said:

We should be no more suspicious of "newfangled" methods in the classroom than we are of "newfangled" gadgets like the radio, in the preaching of the Word of God. Not that we are ever searching for novelty, for novelty's sake. On the other hand, what we are zealous to conserve is not the old but the perennial, which has about it always a holy newness. If we cling to routine procedures, if we refuse to criticize our courses of study, our textbooks, our methods of teaching, if we neglect to weigh them in the balance, to see whether or not they are being found wanting, if we take a cavalier attitude toward everything that is new in education and hold it up to ridicule, I fail to see where we are in accord with the holy progressiveness of him [Piux XI] who wrote: "Nothing must be left untried to avert these grave misfortunes for human society."[18]

In his inaugural address as Secretary of the Association, Johnson set the tone for his administration. After acknowledging that all were united in their desire "to bring Christ closer to our children in the Catholic school," he indicated the work to be done:

The next task of the Association is to come to a better and fuller understanding of what it is all about. We have accomplished marvelous things under the guidance of Divine Providence, yet we have not realized fully our potentialities and possibilities. We need to understand that the very foundation of Catholic Education is Jesus Christ, His personality, and His character.

By open-minded scientific experiment, by constructive thinking, by effective organization and administration we may hope to find the best way of realizing this Catholic ideal of education.[19]

Minor changes such as granting departmental status to the Secondary School Section and the transfer of Association headquarters from Columbus, Ohio, to Washington, D.C. occurred almost simultaneously with Johnson's election. But the NCEA was in need of major "simplification, reduction and reorganization."[20] Serious reorganization work did not get underway until national economic conditions forced small executive-type meetings (1934 and 1935) instead of the customary large-scale conventions. In his "Introduction" to the *Proceedings* for the thirty-first annual meeting (1934) Johnson explained the situation and expressed his satisfaction with the opportunity created:

Due to the conditions of the times, no diocese seemed ready to undertake the

entertainment of a large gathering of Catholic educators on the scale that we have known heretofore. As a consequence, the Executive Committee decided that rather than have no meeting at all it would seem to be in order to give a trial to the suggestion so often made in the past to simplify the meeting and make it more or less executive in character.

The results were even better than had been hoped. A breathing space was afforded the various departments to take stock of themselves and to think of ways and means to make the Association serve better the cause of Catholic education in the United States.[21]

Questions of philosophy were at stake in any restructuring of the Association. For over a quarter century Francis Howard and educators of his traditional cast of mind had set the tone. The telltale issue within the Association had long revolved around the question of standardization and the extent to which secular accrediting agencies endangered the uniquely religious character of Catholic education. As early as 1918 the Association had agreed to establish itself as a standardizing agency. That position had been a middle ground between those who rejected all types of external standardization and those who saw no harm in meeting minimum norms of the state or non-sectarian agencies.

Throughout the years an increasing number of college administrators and diocesan superintendents had come to terms with the practical difficulties involved in establishing training standards and in certifying teachers. Frederick Hochwalt and Anne Whitmer observed that:

Many had established working agreements with various accrediting agencies, state departments of education, and state universities. In many instances such relationships had been cordial and helpful. Their requirements seemed, on the whole, reasonable, and the superiors of the women's orders in particular felt that disregard of secular standardizing agencies would be disastrous to the future development of Catholic higher education for women.[22]

When the issue of a change in policy was raised by the College and University Department at the 1934 annual meeting, it was an occasion for a test of old order forces to hold the line.

The case against any change of policy was made by Henry Woods, S.J., who over the years had been part of a large group of educators to voice the conviction that the

only truly Catholic pedagogy is that "proved by centuries of use which we inherit." Woods expressed the traditional position that contemporary pedagogy was "unnatural" and diametrically opposed to Catholic education. He identified the "Catholic pedagogy" with the fourfold procedure of scholastic pedagogy: exposition, demonstration, repetition, and disputation—a method which could not be followed in a relativist approach skeptical of absolute truth. Woods argued further that rather than "buying" recognition through conformity with secular standards, Catholics should make the sacrifice to win recognition through adhering closely to Catholic educational traditions. It would require sacrifice and time, Woods admitted, "time for them (secular educators) to discover that the new method had destroyed the substance of education, leaving only the husk." But such sacrifice would cause recognition to come to Catholic schools on the basis of merit rather than conformity.[23]

Members of the College and University Department delayed a decision on the standardizing question until the 1935 convention. At the meeting they concluded "that the only attitude that the Association can take toward all the accrediting agencies is one of friendly cooperation and constructively working out together policies that will serve *all* American education."[24] "This decision," Hochwalt and Whitmer concluded, "marked a transition to a certain legislative and executive autonomy on the part of individual departments."[25] The management of the Association as a whole remained under the direction of three men: Francis Howard, chairman of the advisory committee; John B. Peterson, long-time chairman of the Seminary Department and successor to Howard as national President in 1936; and George Johnson, Secretary General. The various departments proceeded with plans for revision of bylaws and structure that would facilitate a spirit of partnership with other American educators and agencies.

A spirit of vitality was displayed throughout the 1935 meeting. The executive board granted departmental status to the School Superintendents. Friendly cooperation with nonsectarian accrediting agencies called for parallel regional organization on the part of NCEA. Both the College and University Department and the Secondary Department developed plans for reorganization into regional units to correspond to the regional organization of voluntary accrediting agencies. The departments also began rewriting their bylaws so that interagency cooperation could be facilitated. Regional meetings were planned to coincide in time and place with regional division meetings of the secular agencies. By 1937 the basic reorganization was complete. Bylaws in

each department had been revised and accepted. At the 1938 meeting the College and University Department took "friendly cooperation" to its logical conclusion. It voted to discontinue its accreditation project and to "accept the judgment of recognized outside agencies in most particulars."[26]

Other changes that followed from the departmental reorganizations were the initiation of departmental publications and a name change for the Parish School Department. Regional meetings within the College and University Department and the Secondary Department created a need for a regular means of sharing information. To meet that need the College and University Department began publishing *The College News Letter* (1941) and the Secondary Department, *The Catholic High School Quarterly Bulletin* (1942). Since the formation of the Secondary Department (1929), membership in the Parish School Department had become almost entirely elementary. As a result the executive board voted a name change (1942)—the Elementary School Department.[27]

Internal reorganization and change in tone toward agencies and ideas outside the Catholic circle were the hallmarks of Johnson's administration. Numerically the Association's convention size and total membership remained relatively stable between 1929 and 1944. The large conventions continued to average between 1,000 and 1,100 registrants. The two executive meetings in Chicago (1934 and 1935) registered just over 400. The 1942 Chicago meeting broke all previous records with a registration of 2,032. Membership records show an increase of a little more than 800 for the period with 3,384 on the rolls, 1943-44. The national office remained a one-person, one room operation in the NCWC Building, Washington, D. C. A full-time secretary managed the office and Johnson would spend perhaps two afternoons a week with the affairs of the Association.[28]

The quarter century between the ends of the two World Wars was a time of ferment in American education. Governmental and non-sectarian agencies to regulate schooling multiplied. Public education was assaulted and transformed by the reforms of progressive education. Throughout the period the NCEA provided a forum in which Catholic educators could wrestle with the issues, measuring them and one another against the perennial in Christian education. Many with Francis Howard spurned the new and believed Catholic educators could best lead the world to Christ by holding fast to the old and remaining aloof from secular education with its experiments, reforms, and regulations. Others were more confident and stood with George Johnson who wrote:

What the world needs, we possess. We have something to give, and we are derelict to our duty in the degree that we separate ourselves from other people and hoard up the grace that is in us.[29]

Johnson was out to bridge chasms and overcome separations. In his person he spanned the distances that had often existed between the NCEA and the Catholic University Department of Education; and between the NCEA and the Department of Education, NCWC. He would have unity and harmonious relationships among national Catholic educational agencies. The move of Association headquarters to Washington placed the Association in a position to overcome separateness between itself and national secular agencies of education—the American Council of Education, the National Education Association, and the U.S. Office of Education to name a few. Under Johnson, Association policy and structure came to embody a spirit of "friendly cooperation" in the service of "all American education." Partnership in American education, not separatism, was the dimension which Johnson gave the Catholic educational ministry at the national level. His death took him from the scene in 1944, but through his teaching he had prepared others to take his place and carry on his programs. His student, Frederick G. Hochwalt, would carry on his work with the Association and develop it into a mature service organization.

The Hochwalt Years
1944-1966

Under the direction of Msgr. Frederick G. Hochwalt the NCEA was transformed from a small struggling organization which represented only a fraction of the U. S. Catholic schooling enterprise into an active, robust organization which counted among its members nearly 100% of all U. S. Catholic educational institutions. Father C. Albert Koob, Hockwalt's successor as NCEA Executive Secretary has aptly commented, "Under Hochwalt's direction the NCEA changed from a paper organization into a mature service organization."[30]

Total membership increased from 3,445 in 1944-45 to 14,788 in 1965-66. The most dramatic increase occurred among institutions at the elementary and secondary levels. In 1944 the NCEA represented only 4% and 20% of those institutions, respectively. By 1965 it represented 84% of the nation's Catholic elementary schools and 94% of the secondary schools.

Increased cash flow was commensurate with the increase in membership. In 1944 the Association handled $33,366. The financial turnover for 1965 was $399,417. Income was generated primarily through membership fees and through the expansion of the annual meetings. The conventions became an effective means of building a sense of solidarity within the organization, publicizing the work of Catholic educators, and raising revenue.

As Hochwalt expanded the Association's membership and financial base, he also developed its internal structure. Under his direction two new departments, five new sections, an adult education commission, several standing committees, and an expanded national staff were added. Chart 1 shows the Association's structure as it existed in 1944. Chart 2 shows the structure at the close of Hochwalt's administration.

When he took office in 1944, Hochwalt divided his time between his duties as Director of the Department of Education, National Catholic Welfare Conference (1944-1966); Director of the Commission on American Citizenship (1944-1951); and the NCEA. Three staff members were housed in a one-room office at the NCWC building in Washington, D. C. In 1966 Hochwalt was named the Association's first full-time Executive Secretary. His staff had grown to 24 full-time employees, and the several thousand square feet of office space in the American Council on Education Building was no longer adequate for the work of the Association.

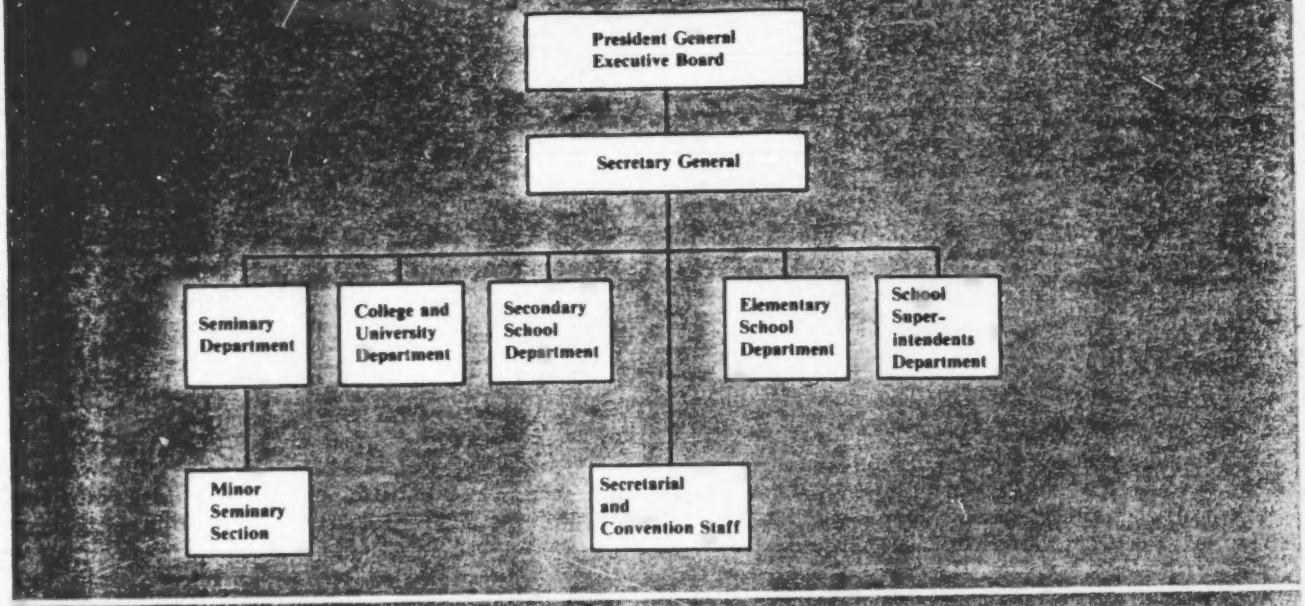
Hochwalt proposed a two-fold plan for the Association: first, the development of an ever-increasing sense of professional solidarity and excellence among Catholic educators; and second, the development of an effective influence base among secular and governmental agencies. The degree to which he achieved these goals is difficult to assess, but the Association's dramatic membership growth over two decades stands as a witness to Catholic educators' willingness to follow his lead. Early in his regime Hochwalt set out to create a Catholic presence among decision-makers, both national and international. His strategy for gaining "influence" was to obtain representation on as many secular boards, commissions, and committees as possible so that the Catholic position could be effectively presented and defended. Through the years he and his staff routinely spent over 75% of their time cultivating such working relationships. Among the secular agencies most frequently mentioned in Hochwalt's annual reports were the American Council on Education, the U. S. State Department, the U. S. Office of Education, the National Commission on Teacher and Professional Standards, national committees and commissions dealing with the United Nations and UNESCO, the Association of American Colleges, the National Education Association, the Religious Education Association, the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.[31]

Msgr. Frederick G. Hochwalt

John B. McDowell, superintendent of Pittsburgh Catholic schools and longtime member of the NCEA executive board, identified the most outstanding characteristic of Hochwalt's administration when he wrote that under Hochwalt's direction "the NCEA grew in size and prestige." Hochwalt's 22-year stewardship, McDowell noted, constituted

. . . a period of most profound growth and development expressed in a dynamic expansion of the professional staff; a vast increase in services to the dioceses and

Chart 1. NCEA Organization Structure, 1944-45



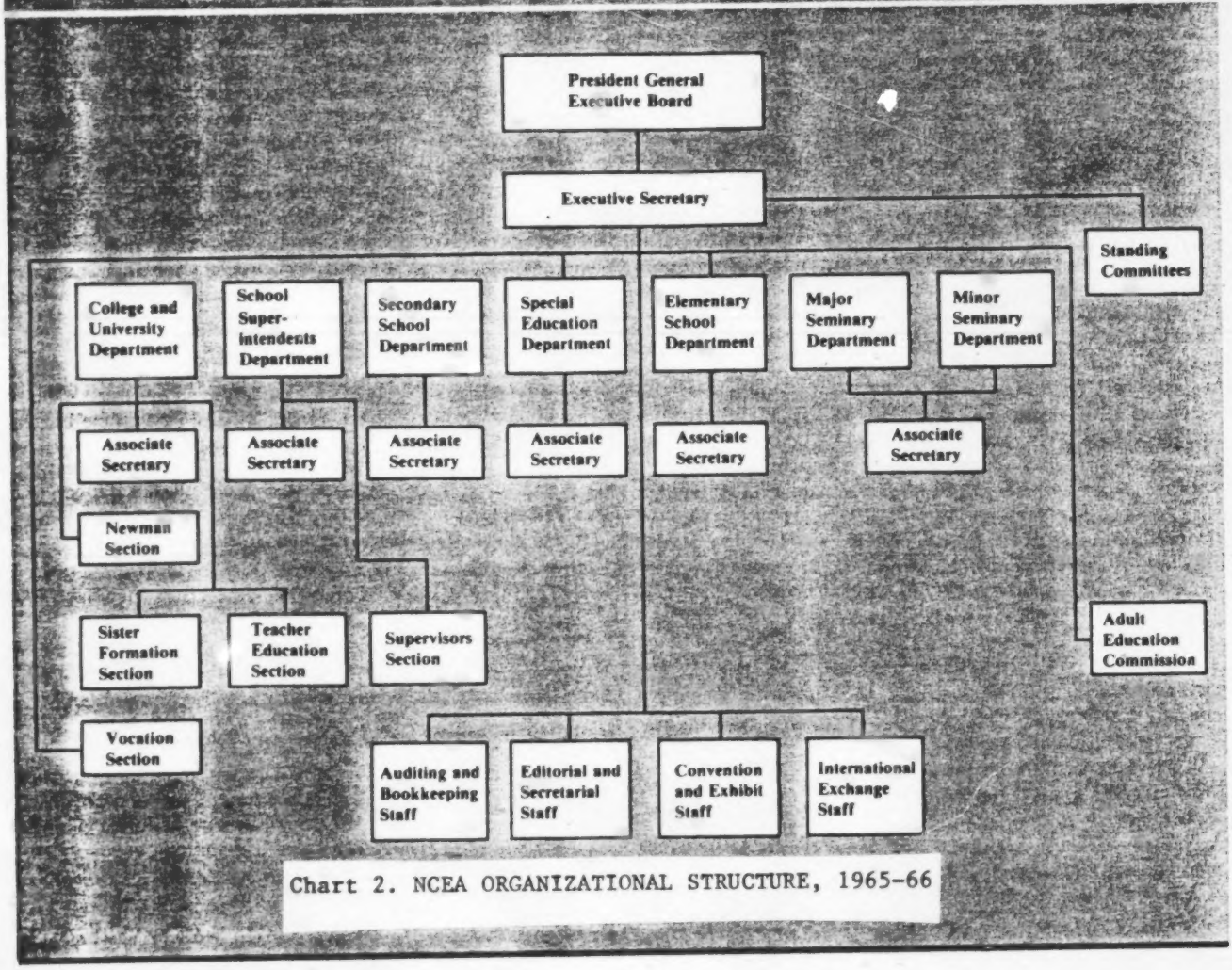


Chart 2. NCEA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, 1965-66

schools of the nation; and a building and planning for the future.[32]

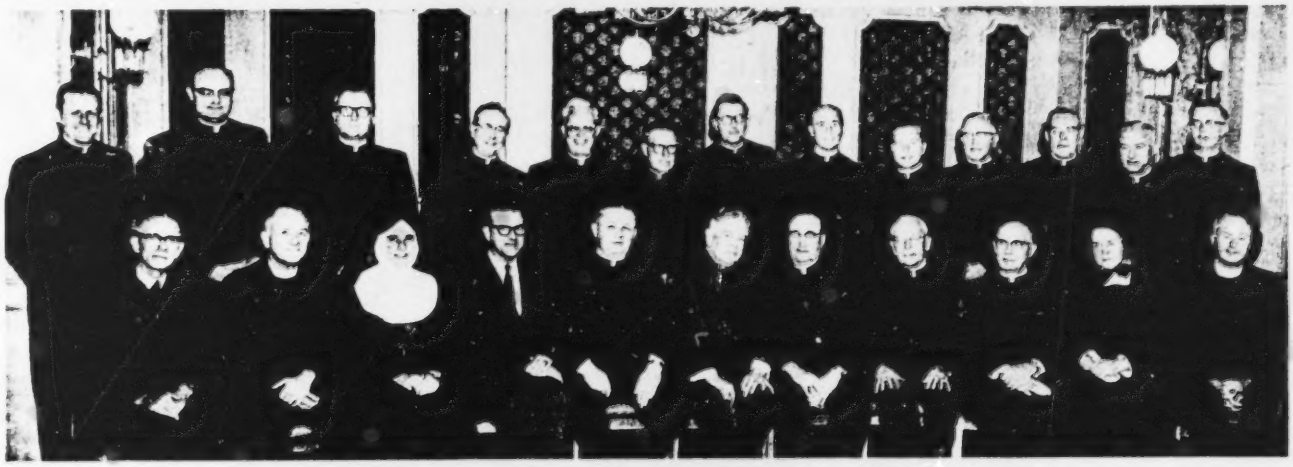
Growth in membership, influence, and prestige was a theme which ran through all of Hochwalt's annual reports to the NCEA membership. The words of his last report, written for the 1965-66 school year, are typical:

The NCEA continues to grow in influence and importance. . . . Both membership and staff have increased. More departmental publications and research studies are being produced. All of this has been made possible by the splendid spirit of cooperation that is found within the organization.[33]

In order to appreciate the significance of Hochwalt's contribution to the NCEA and to Catholic education it is necessary to understand the historical context in which he worked. Educational thought in the United States had undergone a dramatic shift during the Depression years of the 1930s. Policy-makers and curriculum designers began to stress what Henry J. Perkinson, professor of educational history, New York University, has called the "welfare function of the American School." Such an emphasis created a new relationship between the schools and the state. The schools came to be looked upon not simply as societal institutions but "as a a part of government itself. The school were one of the agencies of welfare–agencies of the state."[34] Stress on the political function of the schools brought with it intensified efforts to bring the control of the schools under federal and state legislation. World War II, the emergence of the Cold War, and the postwar baby boom escalated the trend. Education became the first line of defense in the ideological conflict between communism and the free world. For years questions of school standards, finance, and staff had been the preserve of state and local school districts. The circumstances of the 1930s and 1940s combined with the lobbying efforts of national organizations representing tax-supported schools created a willingness on the part of the federal government to become involved in the resolution of schooling issues.

Hochwalt's predecessor at the NCEA, Msgr. George Johnson, had understood

Pictured in 1963, l. to r., Archbishop John P. Cody, Joseph Cardinal Ritter, and Msgr. Frederick Hochwalt.

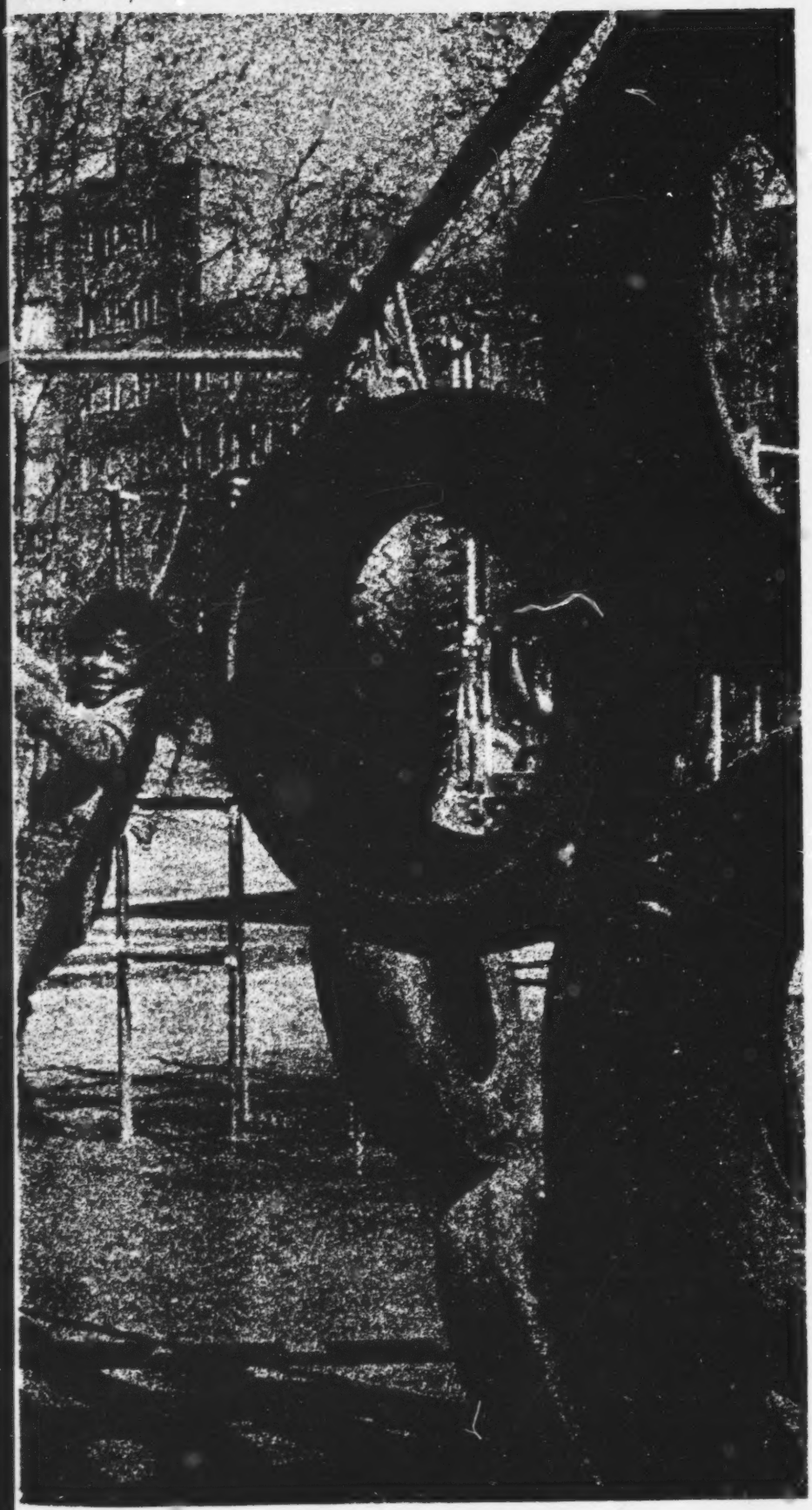


NCEA Executive Board, June 1966: (rear) Rev. (now Bishop) Thomas Lyons, Msgr. Roman Ulrich, Msgr. James B. Clyne, Msgr. Bennett Applegate, Msgr. Frederick Hochwalt, Msgr. James Hoflich, Msgr. Francis LoBianco, Rev. Donald J. Ryan, CM, Msgr. Henry Gardner, Rev. William McNiff, OSC, Rev. Conrad Falk, OSB, Msgr. John E. Murphy, Rev. Joseph F. Lynn OSFS; (front) Bro. Gregory Nugent, FSC, Rev. Michael Walsh, SJ, Sister Mary Edward, SSJ, Dr. William Conley, Msgr. Frank Schneider, Bishop Coleman Carroll, Bishop Ernest Primeau, Msgr. Felix Newton Pitt, Msgr. Carl Ryan, Sister Marie Theresa, CS, Msgr. John P. O'Donnell.

the significance of the emerging trend. Firmly convinced that it was futile for Catholic educators to remain suspiciously aloof from their public school counterparts, he stressed the need for developing a spirit of cooperation and partnership. Under his guidance the NCEA, in 1935, officially adopted such a policy and began revising its departmental bylaws and structure. As Director of the Department of Education, NCWC, Johnson also worked for a similar change in attitude among the bishops. Since the establishment of the NCWC the bishops had staunchly opposed all legislation looking to the federalization or nationalization of education and had been unyielding in their opposition to any federal aid to education legislation. Johnson saw that the passage of some form of federal aid legislation was inevitable and urged the bishops to become involved in its formulation. His chief ally in the effort to advance the Catholic position was a veteran member of the NCWC Administrative Board, Archbishop John T. McNicholas of Cincinnati.

Johnson's efforts to develop a structure for Catholic school participation in national level decision-making were cut short by his death June 5, 1944. To replace Johnson, Archbishop McNicholas, Episcopal Chairman of the NCWC Department of Education, turned to his young assistant superintendent of schools, Father Frederick G. Hochwalt. By temperament and training Hochwalt was an apt successor to Johnson. Between 1937 and 1940 he had studied curriculum development and educational administration under Johnson at Catholic University. In 1943 he completed doctoral studies at the University and was invited by Johnson to join him on the staff of the Commission on American Citizenship. Hochwalt chose to remain in Cincinnati, but his ties with Johnson remained close. In late June 1944, at McNicholas' insistence, Hochwalt accepted the post of Director of the Department of Education, NCWC. On June 28, 1944, the NCEA executive board elected him Acting Secretary General of the Association. Hochwalt also succeeded Johnson as Director of the Commission on American Citizenship, but held the office only for a few years (1944-51).

McNicholas and Hochwalt were of one mind on the need for developing the Church's two national education agencies into effective vehicles for promoting Catholic schooling as an integral part of American education. The need was great. In the battles over federal aid to education waged at the time, proponents sought either to ignore Catholic schools as being outside the perimeters of American education or



to disparage them as a divisive force set to undermine the achievement of democratic ideals.

Hochwalt first focused his administrative efforts on the NCWC Department of Education. Five months after he took office the bishops changed their position on federal aid to education. In a policy statement, Nov. 17, 1944, they acknowledged the need for federal aid legislation but only if such aid were to be distributed equitably to both public and nonpublic sectors of American education; and only if it were to be distributed on the basis of financial need where the state or local governments were unable to provide adequately for the educational needs of their people.[35]

The bishops' change in policy created new possibilities for educational partnership. However, the Department of Education was by nature limited in its ability to conduct a relationship with secular agencies. It was an episcopal agency devoted to the formulation and execution of educational policy under the authority of the bishops. As such it could not enjoy the flexibility of an organization composed of educators free to debate issues and enter into a variety of working relationships with other professional associations. Added to that were limitations in budget and staff. After two years' work both Hochwalt and McNicholas realized that the NCEA – not the NCWC Department of Education – provided the potential for developing the national influence base which Catholic education needed. In 1946 Hochwalt and McNicholas turned their attentions toward the development of the NCEA. Hochwalt explained the decision in a 1961 letter to Cardinal Ritter:

As Catholic education grew and its administrative responsibilities grew within the various dioceses, it became obvious that the national level should reflect this growth. I was able to raise the budget of the Department of Education from $13,000 to $36,000. Beyond that the Administrative Board was unwilling to go. But Catholic education was not standing still. Therefore, with the advice and counsel of our General Executive Board, NCEA, we decided that the services which could not be rendered by the NCWC Department of Education could be rendered by the NCEA if Catholic institutions were willing to support it. They were. Its [the NCEA] budget then rose from something like $8,000 [sic.] a year to a gross operation today of about $400,000, an amount similar to the sum granted by the bishops to the entire NCWC. Since the budget of the NCWC's Department of Education is not going to be increased, we must depend upon the

Msgr. Hochwalt (l.) receives a certificate from Msgr. Henry Hald and Msgr. Henry Bezou.

NCEA for many services to Catholic education. I estimate that the NCEA saves NCWC about $250,000 a year for conferences, meetings, research, personnel, and representation at regional and national meetings of other organizations.[36]

Between 1944 and 1946 the NCEA had been virtually dormant. The 1945 annual meeting was canceled because of an Office of Defense Transportation "ban on conventions." The office of President General, vacated by the death of Bishop John B. Peterson on Jan. 18, 1944, remained unfilled, and Hochwalt, as Acting Secretary General, simply maintained the organization. The period of dormancy ended in the spring of 1946. The executive board elected Hochwalt Secretary General and at the St. Louis convention McNicholas was named President General.

Hochwalt took the measure of the Association's potential and at the 1947 Boston convention presented a series of long-range goals. For the NCEA he proposed steady growth in "influence and prestige." To obtain that he recommended an all-out effort to expand and improve the Association's activities in several areas: membership, finance, annual meetings, committees and special projects, and relationships with other agencies.[37] By the close of the 1949-50 school year Hochwalt, with the support of McNicholas and the executive board, had established specific policies for the achievement of his goals and was well on the way toward transforming the Association into an organization which could speak forcefully for a majority of American Catholic educators and educational institutions.

In 1951 Hochwalt moved the NCEA headquarters into the newly established American Council on Education Building, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W. The building served as a center for national educational organizations with headquarters in Washington. Relocation provided space for physical expansion and gave easy access to the offices of 14 other American Council member organizations. The physical move was symbolic of the ideological move Hochwalt planned for the Association. The NCEA was taken out of the U.S. bishops' secretariate, where it had been since 1929, and placed in the world of American educational associations.

With the election of Archbishop Francis P. Keough of Baltimore to the office of President General (1951), Hochwalt took another step toward developing the professional character of the Association. Although the NCEA constitution limited the term of President General to one year, previous Presidents General had served multiyear terms. Hochwalt insisted that the office be rotated each year so that more bishops could become familiar with the Association's work and so that the executive board would be free of domination by any one individual. Hochwalt defended his practice at length in a letter in 1961 to Cardinal Joseph Ritter:

That the President General of the NCEA should be elected for more than one year is also open for considerable debate. The Executive Board runs the Association and represents the points of view of the executive committees of the seven departments. They speak freely and in the best interest of Catholic education. To superimpose

upon them one Bishop President for three or five years will tend to muzzle the free-wheeling discussion and conversation which now guide the Association so successfully. Having been around for a number of years, I speak from experience. Frankly, since the Bishops have served but one year in their tour of duty, the Association has made its greatest progress from 1951 to 1961. This is a point I have no intention of laboring. It seems to me, however, that to spread the responsibilities among a multiple number of Bishops is to gain friends in various dioceses and to give more Bishops the opportunity to learn about the NCEA. To suggest they cannot learn about it in one year's time means only to say that they were unwilling to read the proceedings and reports. Everything we do and say is reported and any Bishop, no matter how long or short his tour of duty, can become acquainted with the organization if he desires. I for one object to a permanent or long-term President because of the negative effect it has on the members of the General Executive Board. What purpose is there in having the best brains of the country assembled around a table if they are not going to speak up? I am all in favor of frequent changes but not merely for the sake of change. With the change of face, the organization has made its greatest progress. This point should speak for itself.[38]

Hochwalt's plan for staff development called for the provision of at least one full-time specialist to coordinate the affairs of each department.[39] In 1951 he hired Dr. Urban Fleege as the "first fulltime staff associate."[40] By 1958 the office was staffed by six associate secretaries, an executive secretary for the Sister Formation Section, and an office force of 16. For the first time in the Association's history the affairs of each department could receive the full attention of a qualified national staff person. There was, furthermore, adequate personnel to develop the broad range of relationships with other agencies that Hochwalt envisioned.

By 1961 Hochwalt realized virtually all of his earlier objectives for NCEA expansion. Institutional membership increased to such an extent that the Association enrolled 80% of all U.S. Catholic educational institutions. Membership drives had been so successful that maximum possible enrollments were achieved among elementary and secondary schools and among colleges and universities.[41] Convention size and income had increased as dramatically during the decade as had membership. Cash flow for 1960-61 was $225,850 – the highest ever.[42] The 1961 Atlantic

The first copy of Criteria for Evaluation of Catholic Elementary Schools, 1965 *is presented by Mr. John Graninger, business manager of the Catholic University Press, to Msgr. Hochwalt as Sister Mary Nora, SSND, associate secretary of the Elementary School Department, and Bro. Anthony, FSC, evaluation consultant of the Secondary School Department, look on.*

City convention registration totaled over 13,000 and the commercial exhibits produced an all-time profit of $76,000.[43] Hochwalt looked upon the period from 1951 to 1961 as the time during which "the Association has made its greatest progress."[44]

In the spring of 1961 Hochwalt turned his attention to the development of membership services. Once again the Association had outgrown its headquarters' space and Hochwalt proposed the erection of a building which the NCEA could share with other Catholic organizations. Speaking to the executive board he said:

The needs for additional office space, expansion of staff, and expansion of services are extremely urgent now. The NCEA has grown in prestige but, because of limitation of space, has not been able to grow comparably in services. The ideal solution, of course, would be for the NCEA to put up its own building, part of which could be rented to other Catholic organizations.[45]

Preliminary plans were approved and Hochwalt pursued the project with enthusiasm until 1963 when the press of other events and issues caused an indefinite postponement.

During the eight years of the Eisenhower administration (1952-1960) there had been little serious effort to push comprehensive federal aid to education legislation through the U. S. Congress. The Kennedy administration, however, made the passage of federal aid legislation a top priority—and the Kennedy proposals were precise in their exclusion of nonpublic schools. Hochwalt and the NCWC became intensely involved in the controversy. Between March 14, 1961 and Feb. 2, 1965, Hochwalt made eight separate appearances before the various educational committees of Congress. Although he always testified in his capacity as Director of the Department of Education, NCWC, the strength of Hochwalt's testimony rested upon his many years of effort to build influence and prestige for Catholic education through the NCEA.

Hochwalt's efforts were successful. In April 1953, Congress passed and President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the first general aid to education bill ever to clear Congress. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 included provisions in its major programs for aid to nonpublic school children. Passage of the Act was a major victory for the supporters of Catholic and other nonpublic schools.

Several congressmen singled out Hochwalt and his colleagues for having contributed significantly to the formulation of the legislation and for providing leadership which helped make passage possible. Among those on the House Committee on Education and Labor who commended Hochwalt on his role was Congressman Gerald Ford, who said:

As members of this committee, we are all mindful of the extremely important part that you and your associates have played in making possible the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1975.[46]

By the close of the 1965-66 school year Hochwalt could look upon his accomplishments with pride. Growth trends within the Association had continued. His strategy for building an effective national level influence base for Catholic education had been tested in controversy and found sound. For nearly two decades before Vatican Council II he had successfully promoted a spirit of friendly cooperation among all sectors of American education. The Council called such an approach ecumenical and embraced it as a goal for a rejuvenated Catholicism.

During the 1961-66 period the Association reached a peak level in its organizational maturity. That five-year period was the time of its largest membership, conventions, and income. Institutions at all levels of U. S. Catholic education continued to give their overwhelming support to the Association. In 1965 over 88% were NCEA members. Large numbers of educators swelled the annual meetings and income from membership fees and convention exhibit profits reached new highs with each successive year.

The maturity of the Association was tested, however, when in 1965 Hochwalt's declining health made it impossible for him to give his accustomed personal attention to NCEA affairs. Hochwalt's infirmity occasioned a struggle for power among the departments. The school superintendents were especially desirous of obtaining greater authority. It also occasioned a permanent severing of the relationship which had joined the Department of Education, NCWC, and the NCEA since 1929. In its active large-scale form the Association had been personally built and directed by one man—Frederick Hochwalt. The development of its structure had been closely identified with his personality.

With Hochwalt's resignation from the Department of Education, January 1966, the NCEA became totally independent of the bishops' agency and had its first full-time Executive Secretary in the person of Frederick G. Hochwalt. It was free to flourish or flounder on its own. Hochwalt's death, Sept. 5, 1966, forced the Association to confront its future in the post Vatican Council II period as an organization set free of the ecclesiastical structure to which it had long been tied and free of the hands which had nurtured it into maturity.

The Post Vatican Era
1966-1978

In September 1966 the NCEA lost in death the man who had for more than two decades charted the Association's course – Msgr. Frederick G. Hochwalt. In the 11 intervening years the Association has had two chief executives committed to carrying out the commission of Vatican II for the NCEA and for Catholic education in the United States. Father C. Albert Koob, O. Praem., served as Associate Secretary of the Secondary School Department, Executive Secretary and then as President from 1966 until 1974 when injuries received in an accident made it impossible for him to continue in office. Father John F. Meyers succeeded Koob and serves today as President.

It borders on understatement to say that for U.S. Catholic education the post Vatican II years have been a time of change, ferment and crisis. The word "crisis" has been used to describe virtually every area of the Church's educational life – personnel, finance, enrollment, administrative structure and control, morale, mission – just to name a few. The challenge confronting NCEA leadership throughout the period has been that of providing Catholic educators with an effective vehicle to assess their problems and to develop meaningful responses to them. The very existence of the NCEA as a voluntary association of educators and institutions has depended on and continues to depend on its ability to meet members' needs and thus maintain their allegiance. The current healthy state of the organization is a sign of the overall success that its leadership has achieved. Dramatic changes that have occurred in its membership, structure, and services stand as a record of its struggle to

Nancy Brewer

Joseph O'Donnell

remain a viable organization.

Few things have remained constant within the NCEA since 1966. It continues to be a voluntary association composed primarily of Catholic educational institutions and administrative personnel. The NCEA remains dedicated to the promotion of the Church's educational mission. The names of four of its departments have remained unchanged. The biggest annual event is still the national convention. Two delightfully personal constants on the staff are Nancy Brewer, Executive Assistant to the President, and Joseph O'Donnell, Vice President for Business Affairs and Convention Manager. In the 11 years since 1966 almost everything else about the NCEA has changed—at least once!

Changes in departmental structures have been the historical indicators of major developments within the Association. A comparison between the 1966 departmental structure and the 1977 structure casts some light on the way the Association has changed. In 1966 there were seven departments; in 1977 there are eight. Only four of the 1966 departments have remained relatively unchanged, however: College & University, Secondary Schools, Elementary Schools, and Special Education. The Major and Minor Seminary Departments have merged. The School Superintendents Department has been renamed the Chief Administrators of Catholic Education (CACE). Two entirely new departments have been added: Religious Education and Boards of Education.

A cursory comparison of total NCEA membership statistics for 1966-67 (the peak year) and 1976-77 gives only slight indication of the membership crisis that has occurred. In 1967 NCEA enrolled a total of 14,973 institutions and individuals. For 1977 the total is 12,666—a decrease of 2,307. The institutional membership for 1967 was 12,803; for 1977 it is 10,206. Individual membership for 1967 was 2,106; for 1977, 2,460. The bulk of NCEA institutional membership has traditionally come from enrolling between 70 and 80 percent of the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The percentages have remained constant through the decade but the vast decrease in the number of elementary and secondary institutions has had its impact on membership. In 1967 elementary membership was 9,275; for 1977 it is only 5,832. In 1967 secondary membership was 2,239; for 1977 it is 1,232. Elementary and secondary school membership has decreased by 4,450 over 10 years.[47]

The profile of annual NCEA conventions also shows the changing shape of the Association. In the years before 1966 the convention was the Association's largest single source of income. Joseph O'Donnell, Convention Manager since 1958 and Vice President for Business Affairs since 1969, observed that prior to 1966:

The convention generated more money than all other sources of income combined including dues. But that is no longer the case. The dues generate over half of our income. There have been successive increases in dues, continuous membership recruitment campaigns, and concurrently with that there has been a decline in the convention operation.[48]

Rev. C. Albert Koob

Convention registration since 1967 has averaged 11,000. The 1965 New York convention holds the record for the highest registration in the Association's history—26,609. The 1967 Atlantic City convention registered 19,606 and had 843 exhibits. Since 1967 the conventions, according to O'Donnell, have become "statistically smaller in size, smaller in registration, and smaller in the number of participating exhibitors."[49] The 1978 St. Louis Convention will have 429 exhibits.

The income producing capacity of the convention has remained relatively constant, however. In 1969 registration fees were inaugurated for the first time and O'Donnell said that the convention has been "built up to the point where it is yielding as much income in actual dollars as it did in the peak years."[50]

C. Albert Koob has been described as a "moving change agent . . . impatient to get Catholic education moving and keep it

moving."[51] Looking back on his six-year tenure as head of the NCEA, Koob is "most flattered" by the fact that he was known as a man with "different ideas who was willing to challenge the existing structure."[52]

Throughout his tenure in office the word most frequently used to describe the condition of Catholic education was "crisis." But Koob had no fear of crisis. He seemed rather to relish dealing with it. His comments in a 1967 speech are typical:

We are in a time of crisis concerning Catholic education. Fortunately, we no longer find it embarrassing to discuss this crisis and are willing to admit that funds are short, problems pressing, and planning most difficult. But crisis is not failure. A crisis is a time for careful thinking and positive action. At times of crisis the adrenalin flows more abundantly in the human system and men are strengthened beyond normal. At times of crisis leadership emerges and forces gather for mutual support to further the common good. So let it be with our educational crisis.[53]

He was typically unwilling to allow the threat to the future of Catholic education to be defined in terms of enrollment figures or finances. "It is above all," he said, "*a crisis of confidence.*"[54] He challenged Catholic educators and the NCEA as the organ of leadership among them to engage in a

. . . far-reaching restructuring of Catholic education in order to bring it more in line with the contemporary needs of the Church and society and make better use of available resources of manpower, money, and buildings. Such a policy would go far toward resolving the current crisis of confidence in Catholic education, without running the risks involved in either a radical phasing out of schools or a stand-pat, status quo approach.[55]

Impetus and direction for changes with-

in the Association were generated by two events which took place at the beginning of Koob's time in office – the 1967 Symposium on Catholic Education and the decision of the Executive Board to restructure the Association through a complete overhaul of its Constitution. The Symposium on Catholic Education exemplified Koob's desire to face issues head on. Held in Washington, Nov. 5-10, 1967, the Symposium brought together Church leaders, educators and scholars for an in-depth discussion of educational problems within the Church. In his foreword to the book *Catholic Education Today and Tomorrow*, containing the proceedings of the Symposium, Koob said: "For five intensive days, 120 distinguished people were free to say whatever they thought and felt about Catholic education. That is precisely what they did." [56]

The Symposium revealed the need for more research data on schools and on all educational programs. It also pointed out the need for more and better efforts in the field of religious education. Association response followed. With grants obtained from the Carnegie Corporation, Koob was able to set up a fulltime research office and establish the Data Bank on Catholic Education (1969). The NCEA became the first official agency of Catholic education to meet federal statistical needs on a nationwide basis. The Data Bank made it possible for the Association to encourage and assist many diocesan and statewide studies on education.

In 1972 the Association expanded its structure to include the Department of Religious Education (called the Division of Religious Education at the time). Announcing the expansion Koob said: "This move gives official recognition to religious education as a prime concern of the Association." [57]

The 1967 Symposium provided a model and material for numerous NCEA-sponsored regional symposia and workshops. Expanding the Association's field services was a priority with Koob. He recently observed that when he took office field services in the form of regional and local meetings were "practically non-existent. If we were to make any kind of success at all we had to give service to the people in the field. That's one of the things I wanted to concentrate on." [58] By 1971 Koob could announce that the Association was sponsoring approximately one workshop a week.

After an 18-month review of the Association's structure, the board of directors adopted a new constitution (January 1968). The new constitution changed the operational format by regrouping the departments into divisions. The Division of Higher Education included the Seminary and College and University Departments. The Division of Fundamental Education included Elementary, Secondary, Special Education, and Superintendents Departments. A Division of Religious Education was added in 1972. The divisional format was intended to foster more systematic planning and cooperation among the departments. The structure proved unwieldy and was dropped in 1974 in favor of a strictly departmental arrangement similar to the one that had existed prior to the new constitution. The Division of Religious Education then received departmental status.

Perhaps the most significant lasting change introduced in the new constitution was the change in management pattern. For years the board of directors had been made up only of Catholic educators who were members of the Association. The new constitution provided for the election of one-third of the board as delegates-at-large who could come from outside the Catholic educational community. This change has enabled the board to become more flexible and to have access to a variety of points of view and expertise.

A broader definition of the Association's educational mission, the introduction of more systematic budgetary practices, the establishment of a formal liaison between the NCEA and the United States Catholic Conference (USCC), and a restructuring of Association offices were

Father Koob with M. Ekwa, president of the National Catholic Bureau, Kinshasa-Kalina

other changes introduced by the new constitution. The office of President General became that of Chairman of the Board of Directors and the office of Executive Secretary became that of President of the Association.

Koob believed that the success of NCEA's work depended upon a conscious attempt to promote good public relations. A major problem when he took office was that

No one knew we were here. I was convinced from the first day that there weren't enough people who knew what the NCEA was all about. As a result I thought there was only one thing to do. Announce some programs, carry them through, and let people know about them.[59]

In that spirit he launched the 1967 Symposium, the Data Bank (1969), the Joint Planning Councils in six geographical areas (1970), *Momentum* and a new Association publications program (1971), the National Forum of Religious Educators (1972), and the National Association of Boards of Education (1972). He was especially interested in letting foundations such as Ford, Carnegie, and 3M know of NCEA programs. His efforts brought substantial grants to the Association and made numerous projects possible.

Involvements with other private education associations and in international education projects were also a significant part of Koob's public relations program. Carl Balcerak, Director of the NCEA Office of Communications, has emphasized this:

Father Koob prided himself (in a humble sort of way) on his involvement with other private education associations and his participation in international education projects. He helped establish the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) in 1971, and he coordinated or took part in education seminars in Peru, Russia, West Berlin, and Australia. He selected the Global Dimension theme for the 1970 NCEA convention and arranged for educators from several foreign countries to attend it.[60]

Koob's relationships with officials in the federal government were extensive. It was through such contacts that he arranged for President Richard M. Nixon to address the 1972 Philadelphia convention. Although Koob now questions Nixon's motives and feels that the NCEA may have been "used to get the Catholic vote," he still points out that "Nixon was the first and the only president ever to address an NCEA convention."[61]

It is a pleasure to announce to the membership that NCEA has ended the fiscal year with its budget in balance. . . . With 14,200 institutional and dues-paying members on the rolls and a more stable educational climate ahead of us, it would seem that a clear message is being given to the Catholic community and the nation as a whole: Catholic education is in the process of finding new answers to old problems. Increasing in character and stature with each new adversity, Catholic education has demonstrated its ability to meet crises with confidence.[62]

With those words Koob summarized his annual report for 1971-72. A balanced budget – the first one in seven years – was a sign that the Association was successfully meeting the challenge of reshaping itself to respond to the new needs of Catholic educators. Miniconventions, seminars, workshops, self-help publications, an expanded structure for expanded service, foundation grants, and stringent budgeting procedures were working together to restore the Association's vitality. Under Koob's leadership the NCEA had "demonstrated its ability to meet crisis with confidence."

Just at the time things were beginning to go well with the Association Koob was faced with a personal crisis. On Oct. 28, 1972 he was severely injured in a 30-foot fall through a sidewalk grating. After struggling for 19 months to regain his full strength, Koob reached the difficult conclusion that he was not physically able to carry on his work as he felt it should be done. He retired in June 1974.

At the time of his retirement Koob summarized the developments that had taken place in the Association under his administration:

Specifically, this look back sees tremendous changes in the way that NCEA has given Catholic education the professionalism that it requires to fit the pattern of education in America. Research programs have been carried out and a national data bank on the information needed for planning has been instituted. Publications have increased and improved to give leadership to the educators who are on the firing line of daily activity. Boards of education have developed from the mere germ of an idea to a national association. Field service has brought NCEA into contact with local groups of Catholic educators across the nation. The major foundations have come to assist the professional leadership of Catholic education by providing grants for needed research projects. Religious education has become a prime concern as indicated by the amendment to the NCEA constitution to provide for a separate division to look into the needs of religious educators.[63]

John F. Meyers was elected NCEA President in June 1974. He had served as Executive Secretary of the Chief Administrators Department since 1968 and as acting President in the period following Koob's accident. In December 1974 Meyers set the tone for his administration by declaring an end to the period of crisis.

Rev. John F. Meyers

It's a new year. The word "crisis" so customarily applied to Catholic education in the past 10 years is fading from the scene. I would like to announce that it's dead. So let's bury it.

Admittedly, Catholic education has

problems. But then, it always has had and, let's face it, always will have. Catholic educators, however, are learning to live with problems, study them, work out solutions for them. It's part of the excitement of Catholic education.[64]

Steady maturation of Association structure and service programs within the departments has been an overriding characteristic of Meyers' administration. In 1974 the board modified the structure of the Association by eliminating the divisional structure and re-establishing the departments as the principal administrative unit of the Association. That move streamlined the operational format and placed the prime responsibility for coordinating interdepartmental activity in the hands of the President. The only other structural developments have been the formation of the National Forum of Catholic Parent Organizations (1974) and a provision for an office of Director of Development (1975).

In an interview conducted at his office Nov. 1, 1977 Meyers reflected on developments within the Association and discussed them with the author. When asked to comment on the shape he as President has given the NCEA, Meyers chose to emphasize the role of individual departments and to stress the nature of the Association as a "federation of associations."

What has happened in recent years is that the executive committee of each department has come to play a much greater role in determining what the department is going to do and in determining what sort of interlocking types of projects or programs they will get into. Each department plans its own programs and develops suggestions for joint programs. At monthly meetings the staff here discusses what each department is doing and what we feel the total NCEA should be doing.[65]

Meyers believes the present NCEA structure is working effectively.

In addition to monthly staff meetings we go away twice a year for a staff retreat. This is a time for planning and prayer. I usually go to at least one meeting of each departmental executive committee. I think the coordinating function is working out very well. We have a number of cooperative type projects.

Reflecting on developments which have taken place since 1974 when he declared an end to the crisis, Meyers said:

We have come out of the crisis and have come out very well, as a matter of fact. First of all we lost our big campaign for federal aid to education in the Supreme Court. So we began to concentrate on the idea that if Catholic schools were going to survive they were going to survive because of their own distinctiveness. A lot of the effort has been on determining what is the nature of the Catholic school.

Father Meyers with Mother Teresa

Out of the Superintendents Department actually came the concept of the school as the Christian educational community which has caught on throughout the country. Schools are revamping themselves in accord with that concept. Also we began a much stronger public relations campaign with our Catholic Schools Week being the focus. The first two years the theme was Catholic Schools – Different Where It Counts. The emphasis has been on making the schools different and perceptively so. The idea is that parents choose Catholic schools because of the perceived quality of the Catholic schools.

I think all these efforts have paid off. The percentage of children attending Catholic schools has increased in the last year or so. The total enrollment has decreased because the number of children has decreased dramatically. There has been a whole revitalization of the Catholic school as a Catholic *school.*

In 1974 the NCEA created a Department of Boards of Education and a Commission for Parent Organizations. Through them the Association has sought to promote participative decision making and parental involvement in educational processes.

This began in 1968. Since then the NCEA has advocated boards of education and parental involvement in the policy making process. This has been a rather slow movement but it is growing and catching on now. This also has been a big factor in the revitalization of the schools.

Also to help in the revitalization we inaugurated our Department of Religious Education. Most people send their children to Catholic schools because they want some type of religious education program. What we had to do was give all the help we could to make sure that the religious education program in the schools was a very good, effective and current program. CCD or out-of-school programs need the same type of attention and the Religious Education Department is focusing on helping in that area as well.

Our latest endeavor is with parents and the establishment of the National Forum of Catholic Parent Organizations. The purpose behind this forum is, first of all,

to make parents aware of their responsibilities and rights in the education of their children and to help foster better relationships between the home and the school. The third purpose is to give parents some instruction or training in what they can do to help educate their children. Eventually, of course, we hope that this group will also promote government assistance to parents so that they can exericse their free choice in education.

The Religious Education Department, the Boards of Education Department, and the Commission for Parent Organizations have been significant growth areas in institutional membership for the Association. As of June 30, 1977 there were 1,282 members in the Religious Education Department, 204 in the Boards of Education Department, and 334 in the Parent Organizations Commission.

The NCEA has developed programs to service practically every institutional form of Catholic education. There are programs for administrative personnel and parents. The Association is committed to the promotion of the concept of "total" Christian education. Meyers has frequently expressed a desire to enroll classroom teachers as members, but this raises the question of collective bargaining and employment conditions. When asked, "Can the NCEA attract individual lay teachers without dealing with collective bargaining?," Meyers responded:

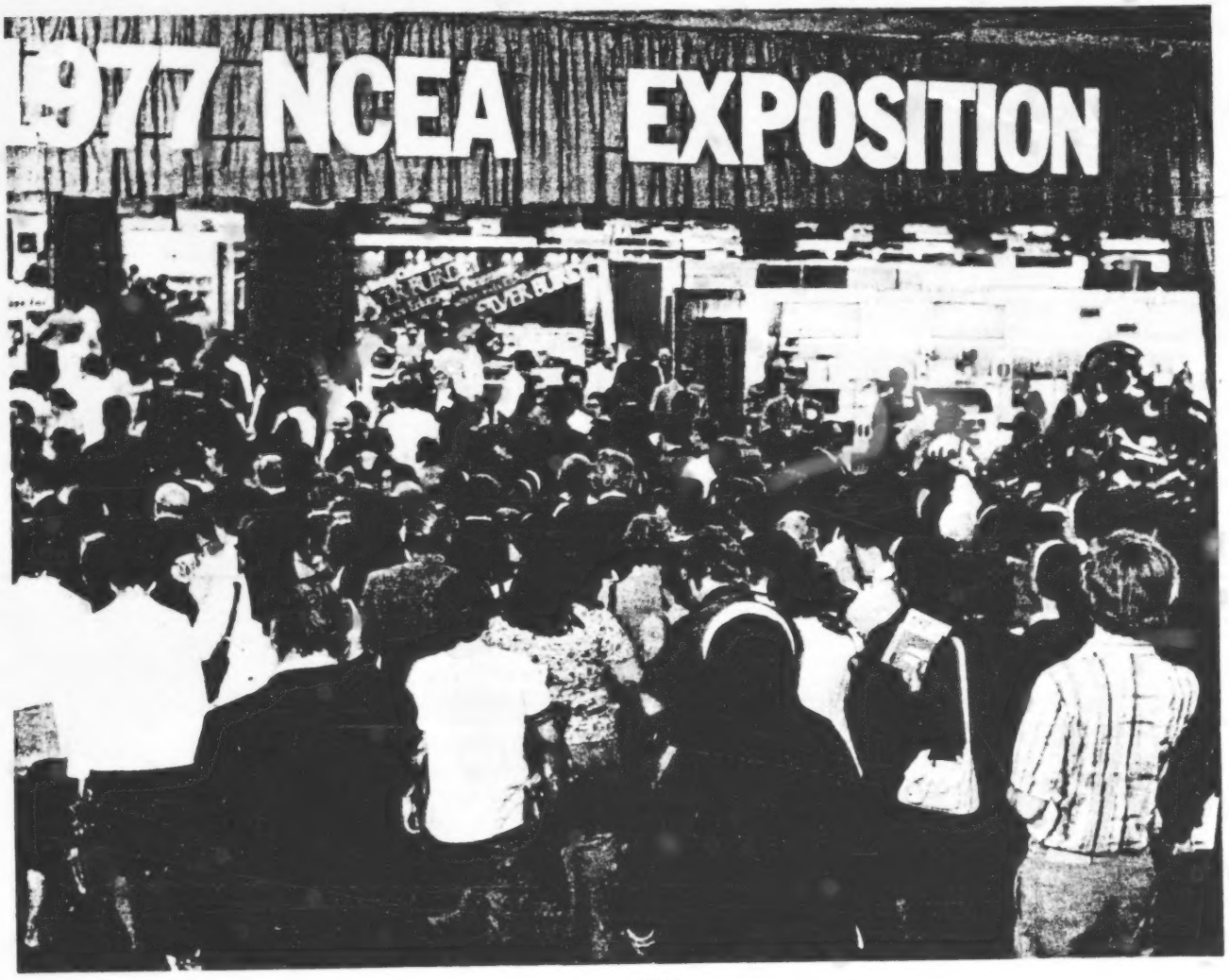
That's a good question. The only thing I can say now is that we are studying the situation. What I would like to do is get every teacher to be a member of NCEA. It seems to me that one of the big things teachers want is to belong to an organization that will deal with the question of salaries and collective bargaining. The question of their professional training does not seem to be enough to entice them into membership.

Basically, we service all teachers without their being members. The convention, any consulting service we have, or any workshops, miniconventions, or institutes are available to any teachers. This of course raises the question why should they become members if they can get the benefits without being members.

We are in the process now of trying to see if there is a new approach to having the teachers as members of NCEA. One possibility may be whether some of the teachers organizations might be interested in joining us or forming a National Catholic Association of Teachers Associations. The big fear from a lot of people is that if the teachers join in great force the administrators will move out. Will this split up the NCEA? It is a very delicate situation.

Basically I think NCEA is a fabulous idea. At the present time it is a very good, strong association. I would like to see everyone who is interested in Catholic education join this federation.

NCEA will begin its 75th year of service at the St. Louis convention, March 27-30, 1978. Meyers is optimistic about the Association's future and believes that



it will develop along lines currently established.

What we want to do is improve Catholic education. We see that there are a lot more facets to Catholic education than simply the Catholic schools. We are focusing on adult education, religious education outside the schools, and also parental involvement not only in the schools but also in religious education where there are no schools. I would say that our Religious Education Department is going to grow and flourish particularly in the area of the parish religious education center. As parishes hire professional directors of religious education they will need in-service help and professional training. The other big growth area, I think, will be with the parents.

I would say we have the community of Catholic education pretty well involved in NCEA. That's what NCEA is—the community of all those involved in Catholic education. As long as we can keep them working together and help them be truly professional, I think we will do a great service to Catholic education.

FOOTNOTES

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5. Plough, p. 87.
6. Conaty, quoted in Plough, p. 163.
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9. Plough, pp. 407-8.
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24. *NCEAB* 32 (November 1935), p. 76.
25. Hochwalt and Whitmer, p. 128.
26. *NCEAB* 35 (August 1938), p. 105.
27. *NCEAB* 38 (August 1942), p. 19; 39 (August 1942), pp. 16-18.
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29. George Johnson and Robert Slavin, *Better Men for Better Times*, Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943, p. 15.
30. Interview Feb. 24, 1972, quoted in Donald C. Horrigan, *Frederick G. Hochwalt: Builder of the National Catholic Educational Association*, Ed.D. dissertation, Columbia University Teachers College, 1977, Ann Arbor, MI: Xerox University Microfilms, 77-14, 727, 1977, p. 217. This article is based on data contained in the above mentioned work. Further citations will be noted as "Horrigan, p. ——."
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37. Horrigan, p. 59.
38. Hochwalt to Ritter, Nov. 8, 1961, quoted in Horrigan, p. 146.
39. Horrigan, p. 78.
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41. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
44. Hochwalt to Ritter, Nov. 8, 1961, quoted in Horrigan, p. 146.
45. "Meetings of the Executive Board," Frederick G. Hochwalt, secy., *NCEAB* 58 (August 1961), p. 16, quoted in Horrigan, p. 139.
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47. Membership statistics for 1966-67 are somewhat inflated by the fact that prior to 1971 approximately 20 percent of the members were one year in arrears. Beginning in 1971 a member in arrears was dropped after the third billing.
48. Joseph O'Donnell, interview, 1 November 1977.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
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57. Koob, "The Third Division," *Momentum*, October 1972, p. 2.
58. Koob, interview.
59. *Ibid.*
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61. Koob, interview.
62. Koob, "A Report From the President," NCEA, 1972.
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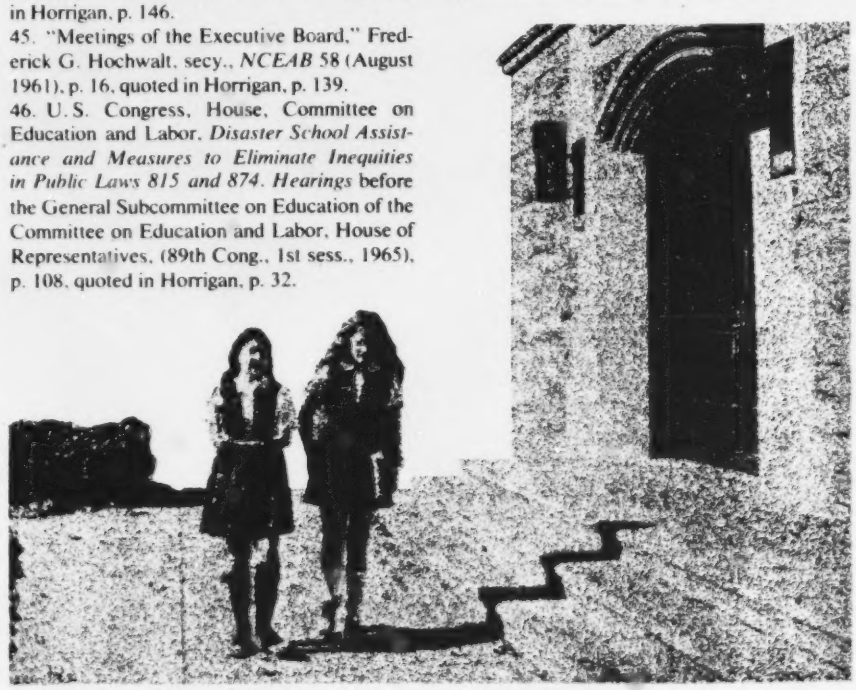
64. John F. Meyers, "Prospects for a Happy New Year," *Momentum*, December 1974, p. 2.
65. Meyers, interview, 1 November 1977. The quotations which follow are from this interview.



NCEA Historical Dates 1898 Through 1978

1898 Founding of the Educational Conference of Seminary Faculties, Thomas J. Conaty, organizer

1899 Founding of the Association of Catholic Colleges. Thomas J. Conaty, President

1902 Founding of the Parish School Conference, Thomas J. Conaty, President; Francis W. Howard, Secretary

1904 Founding of the Catholic Educational Association. Denis J. O'Connell, President General; Francis W. Howard, Secretary General

1906 First teachers' meeting in the Parish School Department

1907 Adoption of permanent constitution

1909 Thomas J. Shahan, President General

1911 Advisory committee established

1916 Establishment of Section of Catholic Colleges for Women; first woman delivered a paper to the College Department. Mary Aloysia Molley (Sister Mary Aloysius, OSF)

1920 Howard accepts position on NCWC Department of Education executive committee, but refuses post of department secretary

1926 Kappa Gama Pi founded

1927 The word "National" added to the title of Catholic Educational Association

1929 Francis W. Howard, President General; George Johnson, Secretary General; Secondary School Section granted departmental status; National headquarters moved from Columbus, Ohio, to Washington, D. C.

1935 School-Superintendents' Section granted departmental status

1936 John B. Peterson, President General; establishment of regional units by College and University Department and Secondary Department

1938 Standardization program discontinued by College and University Department

1940 Delta Epsilon Sigma founded

1941 *The College News Letter* instituted as first departmental publication

1942 Parish School Department became Elementary School Department

1944 Death took three leaders: Francis W. Howard, John B. Peterson, and George Johnson; Frederick G. Hochwalt, Acting Secretary General

1946 Frederick G. Hochwalt, Secretary General; John T. McNicholas, President General

1947 Expansion program initiated

1948 Convention Planning Committee established; Problems and Plans Committee established

1950 Gabriel Richard Lecture Series initiated; John T. McNicholas died; Minor Seminary Section granted department status

1951 Headquarters moved to American Council on Education Building

1954 Special Education Department formed; Vocations Section added

1955 Association membership embraces over 50% of all U. S. Catholic educational institutions; Commission on Adult Education added

1956 Newman Club Chaplains Section added

1957 Office of Treasurer General combined with office of Secretary General; Hochwalt receives title of Executive Secretary; Sister Formation Section added with an Executive Secretary on the National Staff, Sister Mary Emil, I.H.M.; Convention Evaluation Committee established

1958 Staffing goals first fully realized—Associate Secretary for each Department

1960 NCEA Staff House purchased near Georgetown University; Supervisor Section added

1961 Association formally incorporated under laws of the District of Columbia; practice of formulation of general convention resolutions dropped

1965 Adult Education Commission given sectional status

1966 Hochwalt resigns as Director of Department of Education, NCWC, and becomes first full-time NCEA Executive Secretary; C. Albert Kobb, Executive Secretary (title changed to President, 1969)

1967 Symposium on Catholic Education held

1968 New constitution adopted

1969 Data Bank on Catholic Education established

1970 Joint Planning Councils established; *Momentum* founded

1972 Department of Religious Education formed; National Forum of Religious Educators formed; National Association of Boards of Education (NABE) formed

1974 John F. Meyers, President; National Forum of Catholic Parent Organizations formed

1976 Second Symposium on Catholic Education held

1978 NCEA begins 75th year

NCEA Meetings 1904 Through 1978

Meeting	Place	Date	Theme
1	St. Louis, MO	July 12-14, 1904	
2	New York, NY	July 11-13, 1905	
3	Cleveland, OH	July 9-12, 1906	
4	Milwaukee, WI	July 8-11, 1907	
5	Cincinnati, OH	July 6-9, 1908	
6	Boston, MA	July 12-15, 1909	
7	Detroit, MI	July 4-7, 1910	
8	Chicago, IL	July 26-29, 1911	
9	Pittsburgh, PA	June 24-27, 1912	
10	New Orleans, LA	June 30-July 3, 1913	
11	Atlantic City, NJ	June 29-July 3, 1914	
12	St. Paul, MN	June 28-July 1, 1915	
13	Baltimore, MD	June 26-29, 1916	
14	Buffalo, NY	June 25-28, 1917	
15	San Francisco, CA	June 22-25, 1918	
16	St. Louis, MO	June 23-26, 1919	
17	New York, NY	June 28-July 1, 1920	
18	Cincinnati, OH	June 27-30, 1921	
19	Philadelphia, PA	June 26-29, 1922	
20	Cleveland, OH	June 25-28, 1923	
21	Milwaukee, WI	June 23-26, 1924	
22	Pittsburgh, PA	June 29-July 2, 1925	
23	Louisville, KY	June 28-July 1, 1926	
24	Detroit, MI	June 27-30, 1927	
25	Chicago, IL	June 25-28, 1928	
26	Toledo, OH	June 24-27, 1929	
27	New Orleans, LA	June 23-26, 1930	
28	Philadelphia, PA	June 22-25, 1931	
29	Cincinnati, OH	June 27-30, 1932	
30	St. Paul, MN	June 26-29, 1933	
31	Chicago, IL	June 27-28, 1934	
32	Chicago, IL	April 24-25, 1935	
33	New York, NY	April 14-16, 1936	
34	Louisville, KY	March 31-April 2, 1937	
35	Milwaukee, WI	April 20-22, 1938	
36	Washington, DC	April 12-14, 1939	
37	Kansas City, MO	March 27-29, 1940	
38	New Orleans, LA	April 16-18, 1941	
39	Chicago, IL	April 7-9, 1942	
40	cancelled		
41	Atlantic City, NJ	April 11-13, 1944	
42	cancelled		
43	St. Louis, MO	April 23-25, 1946	
44	Boston, MA	April 8-10, 1947	The Role of Catholic Education in the Post-War World
45	San Francisco, CA	March 31-April 2, 1948	Catholic Education and the Problem of Collectivism
46	Philadelphia, PA	April 19-22, 1949	The Relationships of Government, Religion and Education
47	New Orleans, LA	April 11-14, 1950	Education for International Understanding
48	Cleveland, OH	March 27-30, 1951	Human Rights and Education
49	Kansas City, MO	April 15-18, 1952	Education and the American Community
50	Atlantic City, NJ	April 7-10, 1953	Fifty Years of Educational Progress – The NCEA
51	Chicago, IL	April 19-22, 1954	Planning for Our Educational Needs
52	Atlantic City, NJ	April 12-15, 1955	Realizing Our Philosophy of Education
53	St. Louis, MO	April 3-6, 1956	Better Schools for Better Times
54	Milwaukee, WI	April 23-26, 1957	Education and Communication

Meeting	Place	Date	Theme
55	Philadelphia, PA	April 9-11, 1958	The Right to Educate – The Role of Parents, Church, State
56	Atlantic City, NJ	March 31-April 3, 1959	Christian Education: Our Commitments and Our Resources
57	Chicago, IL	April 19-22, 1960	Emphasis on Excellence
58	Atlantic City, NJ	April 4-7, 1961	The Objectives of Christian Education in Contemporary Society
59	Detroit, MI	April 24-27, 1962	Fostering the Ecumenical Spirit
60	St. Louis, MO	April 16-19, 1963	Catholic Education: Progress and Prospects
61	Atlantic City, NJ	March 30-April 2, 1964	Catholic Education and National Needs
62	New York, NY	April 19-22, 1965	Peace and Understanding through Education
63	Chicago, IL	April 11-14, 1966	Curriculum for Renewal
64	Atlantic City, NJ	March 28-30, 1967	Role of Catholic Education in Contemporary American Society
65	San Francisco, CA	April 15-18, 1968	The Dimensions of Catholic Education in a Changing World
66	Detroit, MI	April 7-10, 1969	Catholic Education – Serving a Troubled Society
67	Atlantic City, NJ	March 30-April 2, 1970	Catholic Education – The Global Dimension
68	Minneapolis, MN	April 12-15, 1971	Concern for the Human Person
69	Philadelphia, PA	April 3-6, 1972	Catholic Education – A National Asset
70	New Orleans, LA	April 23-26, 1973	Religious Education – Building Values and Meaning
71	Cleveland, OH	April 15-18, 1974	To Teach as Jesus Did – Message, Community, Service
72	Atlantic City, NJ	March 31-April 3, 1975	Seeking a Just Society
73	Chicago, IL	April 19-22, 1976	Forward in Faith Together
74	San Francisco, CA	April 11-14, 1977	Many Peoples – Shared Faith
75	St. Louis, MO	March 27-30, 1978	Catholic Education – Heritage and Horizons